

CELEBRATE SABBATH

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Purity and simplicity are the two wings with which man soars
above the earth and all temporary nature.**

(Thomas à Kempis)

Wisdom 18:6-9

The first century B.C.E. author reminded his readers that Israel's liberation and emergence as a special people of God was the result of God's plan of salvation. God's plan brought blessing to Israel...they did celebrate the Passover from slavery to freedom. By recalling the events of their collective history and remembering how God was involved in their history, the author tried to call forth from his readers renewed fidelity to God and to their heritage of faith.

The present excerpt, referenced above, tells us that the powerful Word of Wisdom from heaven comes into the land of doom and recreates everything and makes all things new so that the children of God may be preserved and sustained. And all creation praise God, their deliverer and savior.

Psalms 33

The Psalmist calls us to sing a new and joyful song because God is always doing new and surprising things and God's word is: faithfulness, loyal love, covenant love, steadfast love, unfailing love and it is everywhere! The Lord's eyes rest upon those with whom he has covenanted in love. Such is the wisdom of God. His covenant love is expressed in the tender care of all he has created. His word is "Covenant Love", Unfailing, and steadfast love. What else to do but sing a joyful and new song!

**Our soul waits for the Lord,
who is our help and our shield.
May your kindness O, Lord, be upon us,
who have put our hope you.**

Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19

Many of the early Christians, tired of waiting for Jesus to return and tired of being tested and persecuted, began to think of leaving the community. They became spiritually weak and tired of doing good. It is to these people that the letter to the Hebrews was addressed. The Hebrews author, instead of giving them lectures, offered them heroes and heroines of faith for inspiration, among them was Abraham, the father of their faith tradition.

Abraham lived by faith. He journeyed not knowing where he was going with only faith in God's promise as his security. The author of Hebrews suggests that we are

pilgrims, often, going through the valley of darkness. Faith makes the journey meaningful and fearless. Abraham's faith was tested and our faith also will be tested. Be grounded and growing in your faith.

Trusting in God's promise, Abraham began a journey. Living in tents, surrounded by flocks that were their livelihood, Abraham and Sarah had no permanent address. Whenever their flocks had depleted the food supply in a particular area, they struck camp and moved on. We do not live in tents today. But we still are spiritual nomads.

Like Abraham and Sarah, our fidelity to God calls us to journey, to move on, our roots sunk into no earthly place, our source of security in God and God alone.

Abraham's act of obedience began a lifelong habit of saying "yes" with his life to whatever God planned.

Abraham was called again to do the impossible – to sacrifice his only son, to destroy his only hope for descendants. Abraham obeyed, surrendered! His unwavering faith was rewarded far beyond anything he could envision. In his surrender to God's will he became truly free, real and religious – at one with God's Will.

Abraham's call and response have become models for every other call. Like him, we are called again and again to leave the safe and familiar, the sound and the sane, to venture into territories unknown, uncharted and unsure. In all these "leave-takings" Abraham and Sarah remain our models and their faith in God who would lead them become our inspiration and strength!

Letting go is not easy and to let go of a sure and certain and secure thing in order to welcome something new and untried is even more difficult. And that is the challenge! Reflect on the call to let go and surrender to God's plan.

Luke 12:32-48

Jesus taught His disciples to be watchful, alert and awake...to be prepared. He said to them that no one knew the day or the hour when God would break into their history. He also said that the son of man would come when he is least expected.

Be alert! Stay awake! Be watchful! Now is the moment of Grace!

Jesus used imageries familiar to his listeners. "Let your loins be girt" he said...in other words, pull up your sleeves; "keep your lamps burning", trim the wick and replenish the lamps with oil...just be ready to welcome God as and when he breaks in.....you do not know the day or the hour!

How would you like God to find you when he breaks in? Your work completed? Your mission accomplished? Fulfilling the mission given to you? Your lamps burning bright?

Make sure that all is in good order!

Jesus told them the parable of the faithful steward to emphasize the need for preparedness. He asked them about what would happen to a steward who was abusive in his master's absence.

Jesus called them to be faithful even in the master's absence, even when no one is watching. Faithfulness is an enduring quality of a person and not just doing duties and fulfilling obligations.

He also taught them that responsibility came with privilege.... "More will be asked of the man to whom more has been entrusted".

Abuse of privileges brings disaster. Be watchful. Be grateful and be responsible for the gifts and talents which God has given to you.

Saint of the day, August 7 - St. Cajetan and 24 other saints are remembered this day.

St. Cajetan was born on October 1, 1480, into a noble family of Vicenza, Italy. His father died when he was two years of age. He studied law in Padua, receiving his degree as doctor in civil and canon law at age 24. In 1506 he worked as a diplomat for Pope Julius II, with whom he helped reconcile the Republic of Venice. But he was not ordained a priest until the year 1516.

In 1522 Cajetan founded a hospital for incurables in Vicenza. By 1523 he had established a hospital in Venice, as well. His interests were as much or more devoted to spiritual healing than the physical kind, and he joined a confraternity in Rome called the "Oratory of Divine Love". He intended to form a group that would combine the spirit of monasticism with the exercises of the active ministry

In 1523, the Church was in sad shape. People could not get the spiritual nourishment they needed from the large numbers of uneducated and even immoral priests who took their money but returned nothing. When good priests and laypeople turned to the hierarchy for help, they found leaders at best apathetic and indifferent to their concerns.

Cajetan went to Rome, not to talk to the pope or the hierarchy, but to consult with members of the Oratory of the Divine Love. Cajetan and three friends decided that the best road to reformation lay in reviving the spirit and zeal of the clergy. Together they founded a congregation known as the Theatines, from Teate where their first superior bishop had his see. One of the friends later became Pope Paul IV.

They managed to escape to Venice after their house in Rome was wrecked when Emperor Charles V's troops sacked Rome in 1527. The Theatines were outstanding among the

Catholic reform movements that took shape before the Protestant Reformation. Cajetan founded a monte de pieta— “mountain or fund of piety” in Naples, one of many charitable, nonprofit credit organizations that lent money on the security of pawned objects. The purpose was to help the poor and protect them against usurers. Cajetan’s little organization ultimately became the Bank of Naples, with great changes in policy. Cajetan died in Naples on August 7, 1547 and was canonized On 12 April 1671.

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